

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

VICKI CHANG,

Plaintiff,

v.

ANDREW VANDERWIELEN, *et al.*,

Defendant.

CASE NO. C22-0013-JCC-SKV

MINUTE ORDER

The following Minute Order is made by direction of the Court, the Honorable John C. Coughenour, United States District Judge:

Before the Court is Plaintiff's request for the appointment of a new judge (Dkt. No. 35), which the Court interprets as a motion to recuse. Having thoroughly considered the issue, and for the reasons described below, the motion is DENIED.

A federal judge must "disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned," "[w]here he has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party, or personal knowledge of disputed evidentiary facts concerning the proceeding." 28 U.S.C. §§ 455(a), (b)(1). A judge must disqualify under these provisions if "a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned." *Blixseth v. Yellowstone Mountain Club, LLC*, 742 F.3d 1215, 1219 (9th Cir. 2014) (quoting *Persnell v. Arsenault*, 543 F.3d 1038, 1043 (9th Cir. 2008)). "Absent a factual showing

1 of a reasonable basis for questioning his or her impartiality, or allegations of facts establishing
2 other disqualifying circumstances, a judge should participate in cases assigned.” *Maier v. Orr*,
3 758 F.2d 1578, 1583 (Fed. Cir. 1985). “Conclusory statements” or a party’s “unsupported beliefs
4 and assumptions” do not require a judge to recuse. *Id.*

5 Plaintiff asks for the assignment of a judge unaffiliated with the University of
6 Washington because of Defendant Riddhi Kothari’s affiliation with the institution. (*See* Dkt. No.
7 35 at 1.) While this Judge does, in fact, serve as an adjunct lecturer at the University of
8 Washington School of Law, he donates all compensation received to the institution. Therefore,
9 the Court concludes that it has no financial interest in this matter. And it further concludes that
10 its impartiality cannot be reasonably questioned.

11 Accordingly, the Honorable John C. Coughenour, U.S. District Judge, DECLINES to
12 voluntarily recuse but REFERS the motion to Chief Judge Martinez under LCR 3(f) for further
13 consideration.

14
15 DATED this 18th day of April 2022.

16 Ravi Subramanian
17 Clerk of Court

18 s/Sandra Rawski
19 Deputy Clerk